



Seven
National
of Hokkaido
Parks

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Cooperation/Hokkaido Regional Environment Office

Seven
National
of Hokkaido
Parks

Find amazingly breathtaking natural beauty here.

Welcome to Hokkaido's national parks.

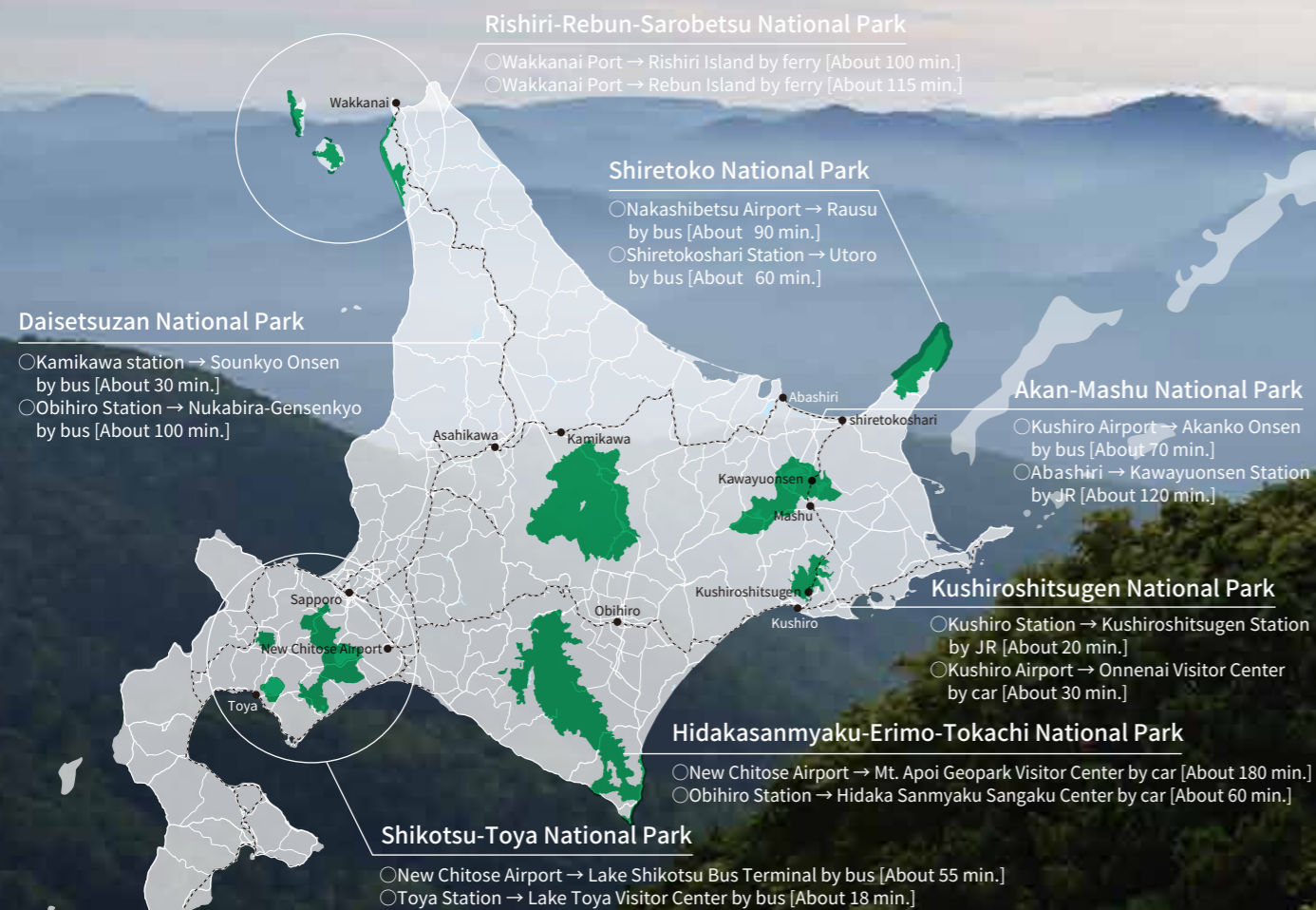
The first national park in Japan was established in 1934.

Hokkaido's seven national parks, including Hidakasanmyaku-Erimo-Tokachi National Park, which was designated in 2024, all feature a wealth of grand scenic beauty, wild fauna and flora, history, and culture.

To ensure that all guests can immerse themselves in nature and enjoy a variety of activities, our national parks feature visitor centers, walking trails, nature observation events, and guided tours.

Come see the beauty that awaits at Hokkaido national parks.

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Provided by the official Ministry of the Environment site: National Parks of Japan <https://www.env.go.jp/park/>



⚠ Parks Rules, Safety & Disaster Information

When visiting any national park, it's important to observe certain rules to protect the environment. Please keep Japan's national parks clean and safe for everyone to enjoy now and for generations to come.

Below are general rules to follow when in Japan's national parks. Please be sure to check the rules of each national park when you visit, as each may have its own region- or park-specific rules.

*Refer to Japan National Tourism Organization website, contents provided by Ministry of the Environment, Government of Japan

- Respect the natural environment
- Leave no trace
- Don't light fires
- Stay on designated trails
- Don't camp outside designated areas
- Don't feed wild animals
- Don't approach wild animals
- Drive safely
- Don't smoke outside designated areas
- Prepare for your visit
- Check if your destination has restrooms
- Be considerate of the local community

Hidakasanmyaku-Erimo-Tokachi National Park



This is Japan's largest continental national park, and centers on the Hidaka Mountains, which cover nearly 140 km in a north-south direction in the central southern part of Hokkaido. This spot is home to amazing untouched natural vistas, such as Mount Poroshiri, the highest peak at 2,052 m, and Mount Apoi Geopark, designated as a UNESCO Global Geopark. The vast Tokachi Plain offers panoramic views of grand mountains. It's unique coastal scenery including Cape Erimo, and Funbe Falls tumbling over the rock from the top of a cliff, are both worth a look. The vast tract of land from the coast to the inland area, varied altitudes, and north-south length make it a varied environment rich in biodiversity.

DATA

Date of Designation June 25, 2024

Area 245,668 ha (land area)



Nature

In the Hidaka Mountains, which were formed when continental plates collided, you can see continuous geological cross-sections on the surface and peridotite that has not been weathered around Mount Apoi. Large, natural mixed forests of deciduous broad-leaved trees and northern coniferous trees surround the foothills of the mountains, with the Saru River Headwaters Primeval Forest in the north being designated as a natural monument by the Japanese government. The area around Nissho Pass on the border of Hidaka and Tokachi is surrounded by an Erman's birch forest. In the clearing, you can see grassland flowers such as wooly geraniums and shikotan buttercups.

flora & fauna



Apoi Kuwagata

This is an alpine perennial in the plantain family. It comes from a similar flower that adapted to the unique soil of Mount Apoi.



Hidaka-so

This alpine plant is endemic to Mount Apoi. The delicate, white flowers make it popular, but it has been endangered by thieves.



Harbor Seal

This is the only species of seal that resides on the Japanese coast, and ranges from the eastern coast of Hokkaido to Cape Erimo.



Grizzled Skipper

Belonging to the skipper family, this butterfly can only be found around Mount Apoi in Japan, which is why it is thought to be a relict of the ice age.

Activity



Horseback Riding & Trail Riding

Even beginners can enjoy horseback riding with advice from an instructor. Horseback riding and trail riding in Hidaka, the number one horse breeding spot in Japan, is truly special.



Mountain Climbing

With the right preparation and skills, peaks such as Mount Tsurugi (1,205 m) and Mount Apoi (810 m) are suitable for beginner to intermediate climbers, and can be completed on a day trip. An amazing view awaits at the summit.



Rafting

Enjoy a thrilling rafting experience on the Saru and Mukawa rivers, which start in the Hidaka Mountains. The rivers are swift and high in April and May when the melting snows cause them to rise.



Kelp Cruise

Kelp cruises are available on Cape Erimo. Hop on board a kelp harvesting boat and see wild seals and views of the Hidaka Mountains from the ocean.

Life & Culture



Ainu Culture in Nibutani

Nibutani in Biratori is a hub of Ainu culture. There are many studios that specialize in weaving, embroidery, and woodcarving, making it a great place to experience living, breathing Ainu culture today.



Kelp Harvesting

Thanks to abundant *Laminaria angustata* kelp (also known as Hidaka konbu in Japanese) growing around the shore reefs, the area has a prospering kelp harvesting trade, and watching harvesters is part of typical summer scenery here.



Horse Culture in Tokachi Area

Competitions that pit workhorses first bred during the Hokkaido pioneer period against one another are held all across the island. Obihiro is the only place in the world where Ban'ei horse racing events are held, which test the power of large work horses.

Enjoy the best of Hidaka nature straight from the source.

Shizen Kobo Nature Designing

Hiroki Suzuki



We offer an outdoor experience for one group per day at the headwaters of the Saru River, deep in the Hidaka Mountains, also known as the 'Backbone of Hokkaido,' and run a private inn. Come enjoy the best of Hidaka nature straight from the source and refresh both body and mind!

Daisetsuzan National Park



Known as the 'Roof of Hokkaido,' the Daisetsuzan Volcanic Group is a mountain range with Mount Asahi, the tallest mountain in Hokkaido, as its main peak. The Omote-Daisetsu area in the center is known for its large scenic mountains, such as the Daisetsuzan Volcanic Group with Mount Asahi in the center, and deep valleys. The Mount Tokachi area, with active volcano Mount Tokachi in the center, is a group of volcanoes that offer gorgeous scenery stretching from Biei to Kamifurano. The Higashi Daisetsu Area in the Tokachi River basin is a charming mixture of the mountains and deep forests of east Daisetsu, Lake Shikaribetsu, and Lake Nukabira. The many hot springs in the park are perfect sightseeing spots.

DATA

Date of Designation December 4, 1934

Area 226,764 ha



Nature

Daisetsuzan National Park is home to three active volcanoes, with Mount Tokachi erupting numerous times in recent years. On both sides of Sounkyo and the Tenninkyo Gorge, you can see polygon-shaped rocks known as columnar joints which are evidence of a past eruption. The large park is truly a diverse place with different geological features and weather conditions. When looking at the colorful alpine flowers that dot the landscape, it's no wonder that the Ainu called it Kamuy Mintar, meaning 'garden where the gods play.'

Flora & Fauna



Ezo Oyamano Endo

This perennial is endemic to the Daisetsuzan Volcanic Group, and can only be found here, on Rebun Island, and in Abashiri. It is unique for its purple petals and being covered in white, silky fibers.



Hosoba Uruppuso

This species of perennial is endemic to the Daisetsuzan Volcanic Group, and grows in sandy soil at high altitudes. It forms a columnar shape with many pale purple petals.



Ezo Pika

This is a subspecies of the northern pika, which can be found all across the Eurasian continent. In Japan, they make their home in the Do-o and Doto areas of Hokkaido.



Eversmann's Parnassian

In Japan, this alpine butterfly lives only in the Daisetsuzan Volcanic Group and the surrounding highlands. It is designated as a natural monument in Japan.

Activity



Rafting

Zip down the Ishikari River on the rising snowmelt water while taking in the scenery of the columnar joints in Sounkyo Gorge. This is the perfect place to experience the ancient history of area volcanoes and see how the Daisetsuzan Volcanic Group formed the landscape.



Mountain Climbing

There are plenty of charming mountains in the park such as Mount Asahi, Mount Tomuraushi, and Mount Tokachi. Each section of trail has a designated Daisetsuzan Grade with difficulties ranging from 1 to 5.



Trekking

Mount Asahi and Mount Kuro are equipped with ropeway cars and trekking routes so you can take in the beauty of the alpine flora and scenery while enjoying a stroll.



Skiing & Snowboarding

Kurodake Ski Area and Asahidake Ski Resort offer powdery snow you'll only find at the high altitudes of the Daisetsuzan Volcanic Group. Skiing is available every year until around May.

Life & Culture



Nupuri Kor Kamuynomi

This ceremony offers a prayer for the safety of mountain climbers when Mount Asahi, the tallest peak in Hokkaido, opens for the season. A traditional Ainu ceremony and ancient dance are performed along with a torchlight procession that the general public can join.



Lake Shikaribetsu Kotan

A kotan, or village in the Ainu language, of ice and snow appears on frozen Lake Shikaribetsu in winter. This famous event began as a way to enjoy the harsh winter by building igloos out of ice blocks.



Former National Railways Shihoro Line Concrete Arch Bridges

Known as the 'Phantom Bridges' because they sink in Lake Nukabira depending on the season, these concrete arch bridges, such as the Taushubetsu River Bridge, date back to the former National Railways Shihoro Line of the pioneer period in Hokkaido.



Experience the wealth of Hokkaido nature firsthand.

« Lake Shikaribetsu Nature Center

Shoji Ishikawa



Come here to savor the nature of Lake Shikaribetsu and the Daisetsuzan Volcanic Group firsthand. From canoeing and sea kayaking to snowshoeing in the winter, I strive to offer guests a variety of activities while enjoying Hokkaido's abundant nature together.

Akan-Mashu National Park



This park, located in eastern Hokkaido, has the longest history of any national park on the island. Its foundation are the Akan, Kussharo, and Mashu calderas formed by Chishima Volcanic Zone activity, and it can be divided into two major areas: Akan and Mashu. The Akan area is known for its scenic beauty that is a blend of Mount Meakan, Mount Oakan, and nearby Lake Akan and Lake Onneto. The Mashu area is home to Lake Mashu, which is known as one of the clearest lakes in the world, and Lake Kussharo, the largest caldera lake in the country, as well as forests that change throughout the seasons.

DATA

Date of Designation December 4, 1934

Area 91,413 ha



Nature

The Akan Caldera was formed by volcanic activity between 150,000 and 100,000 years ago, and the original shape of Kussharo Caldera was formed by a major eruption between 130,000 to 100,000 years ago. Including Mashu Caldera, which was formed in a major eruption nearly 7,000 years ago, this area is a rare example of geography in Japan where volcanoes and lakes are squished together in a relatively small area. Most of the park is covered in natural mixed forests of subarctic coniferous and broad-leaved trees. It is one of the best examples of a Japanese national park that has remained largely unchanged since ancient times. The vast forest and unique lakes and marshes form the backbone of the park's ecosystem.

Flora & Fauna



Marimo

Marimo are balls of green algae that live in Lake Akan. They are designated as special natural monuments of Japan thanks to their beautiful spherical shapes.



Wakoto Minmin Cicada

The Wakoto Peninsula consists of a lava dome subject to high geothermal heat, and this southern robust cicada that lives here is part of a species whose habitat was fragmented. It is designated as a natural monument of Japan.



Yezo Sika Deer

A subspecies of sika deer, this animal is the largest deer in Japan and only lives in Hokkaido. Their main habitat is the forest inside Akan-Mashu National park.

Activity



Canoe Tour

Travel down the Kushiro River from the source, which runs from Lake Kussharo. There are many difficult twists and turns at the headwaters, but with a guide, you'll have no problem navigating your canoe.



Fly Fishing

Lake Akan, which is home to species of fish native to Hokkaido such as the Japanese char and red salmon, is a mecca for trout anglers and many other kinds of fishers.



Mashu Kussharo Trail

This trail runs around Lake Mashu and Lake Kussharo. It's the perfect place for a stroll while taking in the dynamic natural scenery formed by volcanoes, Kawayu Onsen, and the natural hot spring spots around the shores of Lake Kussharo.



Atosanupuri (Mount Io) Trekking Tour

Because trees don't grow here, Mount Io is known in the Ainu language as Atosanupuri, meaning 'naked mountain.' Enjoy a guided tour where you can see the beautiful fumaroles of Mount Io and sulfur crystals up close.

Life & Culture



Ainu Culture

In the Ainu culture, mountains, rivers, fire, and wind are all kamuy (gods) or their embodiment. This is much to learn in this special place where you can experience the sense of Ainu values and their reverence for nature.



Ainu Kotan

The Aino Kotan in Akanko Onsen is the largest Aino village in Hokkaido. Come here to experience Ainu culture such as traditional dance, clothing, patterns, and way of life.



Hot Springs

The many hot springs in the area, such as Akanko Onsen, Lake Kussharo Onsen, and Kawayu Onsen are all a testament to the caldera in Akan-Mashu National Park, and one of the main sightseeing destinations.



Enjoy today while thinking of the future among the great outdoors.

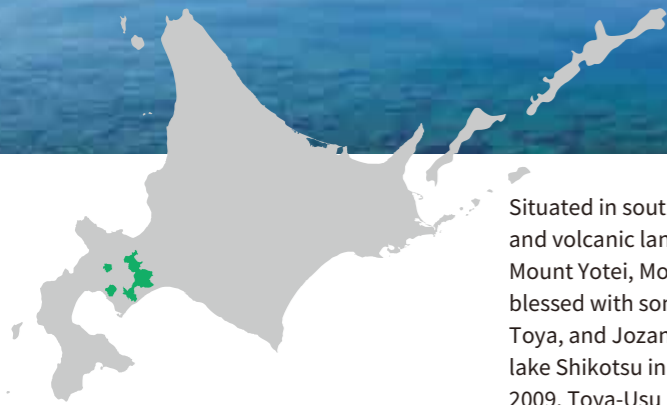
« Akan Nature Center

Gaku Yasui



Our motto is 'enjoy today while thinking of the future,' and based on it, we offer safe canoeing, guided nature tours, and outdoor activities, always keeping in mind our impact on the environment. Come and savor everything the great outdoors of Akan has to offer with us!

Shikotsu-Toya National Park



Situated in southwestern Hokkaido, visitors to this national park will find many volcanoes and volcanic landforms such as the two large caldera lakes, Lake Shikotsu and Lake Toya, Mount Yotei, Mount Usu, and Mount Tarumae. Thanks to the active volcanoes, the area is blessed with some of Hokkaido's most famous hot spring areas such as Noboribetsu, Lake Toya, and Jozankei. Its enchanting lakes, forests, and volcanoes are a treat to behold and lake Shikotsu in particular is famous for being the northernmost ice-free lake in Japan. In 2009, Toya-Usu UNESCO Global Geopark was the first place in Japan to be designated as a Global Geopark due to its rare geological heritage sites.

DATA

Date of Designation May 16, 1949

Area 99,473 ha



Nature

This national park consists of Lake Shikotsu and Lake Toya, two of Japan's most famous caldera lakes, and many volcanoes such as Mount Usu and Mount Yotei, which are still active today. Spots that are evidence of past volcanic activity, like Hell Valley, and lakes and marshes, dot the vast forests of deciduous broad-leaved trees such as the Mongolian oak and painted maple, and mixed coniferous and broad-leaved trees such as Ezo spruce and Erman's birch. This charming park is the perfect place to learn about the wisdom of people who have lived alongside volcanoes for generations.

Flora & Fauna



Iwabukuro

This perennial belongs to the plantain family. Because it is frequently found on Mount Tarumae, it is also called the tarumaiso (or tarumaeso).



Ezo Engosaku

This perennial belongs to the poppy family in the Corydalis genus. It is a famous spring ephemeral that grows in patches on the forest floor after the snows melt.



Red Salmon

This freshwater fish belongs to the Salmonidae family in the Salmoniformes genus. It originates with sockeye salmon from the lakes and marshes, and is also called a chip in Hokkaido, a name that comes from the Ainu language.



Black Woodpecker

The male of this species of woodpecker, which is the largest in Japan, has a jet-black body and crimson head. It is designated as natural monument of Japan.

Activity



Canoeing

Tour Lake Toya, Lake Shikotsu, and the Toyohira River in a Canadian canoe. Guides provide easy-to-understand instructions so that even beginners can enjoy themselves.



Horse Trekking

Enjoy horse trekking on an authentic mountain course that offers panoramic views of Lake Toya, Mount Usu, and Showa-shinzan.



Spring Watching Tour

Visit the source of Noboribetsu Onsen such as Hell Valley and Oyunuma Pond with a local guide. At the end of the tour, you can soak your feet in a natural foot bath in the forest.



Clear Kayaking on Lake Shikotsu

Head out onto Lake Shikotsu on a clear-bottomed kayak and enjoy the beauty of some of the purest water in Japan. This activity is also available in winter if you wear a dry suit.

Life & Culture



Showa-shinzan

Showa-shinzan is a mountain that formed in just two years during volcanic activity that began in 1943. The incredible sight of volcanic smoke rising from the bare rock is a great way to feel the raw energy of the earth.



Mount Usu Ropeway

The trip from the base to the summit takes about six minutes. The windows of the large gondolas, which can accommodate up to 106 passengers, offer amazing views of nature from Showa-shinzan to Lake Toya, Mount Yotei, and Mount Usu.



Yamasen Bridge Ruins

The Oji Light Railway, which was in service until 1951, once ran along this red iron bridge. It is now used as a walkway, and its nostalgic figure is a popular photo spot on Lake Shikotsu.



Come enjoy the wonder of nature around Lake Toya.

« Toya Guide Center

Yuji Ogawa



The beauty of seasonal nature on and around Lake Toya are even better when walking or canoeing around the area. Come bask in the fresh, relaxing air of the lake and appreciate the charms of the land that has slowly changed over many, many years.

Shiretoko National Park



Known for its rich ecosystem of wild animals, the grand, steep scenery of the park was formed over many years by volcanic activity and drift ice. Highly valued for the connection between its biodiversity and ecosystem of ocean, rivers, and forests, Shiretoko was registered as a UNESCO Natural World Heritage site in July 2005. A total of 36 species land mammals and 22 species of marine mammals have been confirmed, including some rarely found in other parts of the planet. Additionally, 275 species of birds have been recorded here including the endangered Blakiston's fish owl and white-tailed eagle.

DATA

Date of Designation June 1, 1964

Area 38,954 ha (land area)



Nature

The Shiretoko Peninsula is a long, narrow strip of land measuring nearly 70 km long by about 25 km wide at its base. The summit of Mount Rausu, the main peak here, offers gorgeous views of the Shiretoko Mountains rising up on both sides of the ocean. Hundred-meter-high cliffs formed by drift ice line the west side of the peninsula, and are home to untouched natural spots thanks to their inaccessibility. On the other hand, the eastern side is lined with rocky beaches against sheer cliffs, and simple lodging houses dot the area all the way to the tip. Shiretoko Peninsula's contrasting features makes it a uniquely scenic spot.

Flora & Fauna



Shiretoko Violet

This perennial is endemic to the area and can only be found in the Shiretoko Mountains. It only grows in sandy soil at high altitudes.



Killer Whale

These magnificent creatures swim around the ocean off Shiretoko most years from April to August and can be seen from land. There are also killer whale cruise tours.



White-tailed Eagle

This is one of the largest birds of prey in Japan. They fly in from Russia to spend the winter here and some individuals breed in Shiretoko.



Brown Bear

The brown bear is the largest land animal in Japan. It is estimated that several hundred live on the Shiretoko Peninsula, which is said to be one of the highest population densities in the world.

Activity



Traversing the Shiretoko Mountains

The Shiretoko Mountains, also known as the roof of the Shiretoko Peninsula, can be traversed in three days and two nights with the right knowledge and equipment. It's the perfect place to enjoy a mountain climb amongst an environment formed of dense natural vistas and volcanic activity.



Shiretoko Goko Lakes Guided Walk

Packed with the nature of the area, the Shiretoko Goko Lakes are five lakes that offer amazing scenic beauty. Enjoy a walk around the nearly three-kilometer promenade that circles the area while your guide points out scenic highlights and animal tracks.



Shiretoko Pass Downhill Cycling

This exhilarating cycling tour starts at an altitude of 740 m at Shiretoko Pass, then heads toward the ocean. A guide will accompany you for a safe trip and you may even encounter some animals on the way.



Drift Ice & Bird Watching

Embark on a drift ice sightseeing cruise that pushes through chunks of ice while you search for wild animals and birds wintering in Shiretoko. You have a good chance of seeing a white-tailed eagle or Steller's sea eagle on this excursion.

Life & Culture



Salmon & Trout Fishing

The bustling coastal fishing industry here mainly uses fixed nets, and the salmon and trout catches are among the largest in Hokkaido.



Huts & Kelp Drying

Huts that serve as work stations and lodgings line the coast of Rausu, and in summer, during kelp harvesting season, the entire area is covered in kelp drying in the sun.



Sea Urchin Fishing

The flavor of Rausu sea urchin raised on luxurious Rausu kelp is truly delectable. Visitors can watch sea urchin fishing from the shore from January, when the drift ice arrives, until early summer.



Come experience the dynamic nature of Shiretoko firsthand.

Shiretoko Guide House pikki

Satoru Wakatsuki



One of the best things about Shiretoko is experiencing the incredible living, breathing environment that so many wild animals and birds call home. We are a husband and wife guide team of that offer private tours so that you can truly experience the great outdoors with all five senses as they are meant to be seen. We look forward to sharing the profound beauty of a UNESCO Natural World Heritage site with you.

Rishiri-Rebun-Sarobetsu National Park



Located in northwestern Hokkaido, this is the northernmost national park in Japan. Beautiful Mount Rishiri, also known as Rishiri Fuji, is a composite volcano that stands as a symbol of the park. The varied scenery covering the vast grounds includes two islands; Rishiri Island, where Mount Rishiri is found, and Rebun Island, which is home to rare flora including alpine plants that can be seen at low altitudes, making it well known as the 'flower island.' Sarobetsu Plain, which spans the mainland side of Hokkaido, is home to one of Japan's largest high-altitude wetlands, where flowers adapted to harsh conditions bloom. It is also protected by the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, and visitors can see many migratory birds here.

DATA

Date of Designation September 20, 1974

Area 24,512 ha (land area)



Nature

The solitary peak of Mount Rishiri is a great place to see how plants change depending on the altitude. Just a little way up the mountain you'll find mixed coniferous and broad-leaved forests, and at 500 m, coniferous trees, mainly the Sakhalin fir, start to grow, and at 1,100 and above you'll find Japanese stone pines and alpine plants. The cold climate and strong westerlies make it impossible for tall plants to grow on the west side of Rebun Island, but at sea level you can see alpine plants including species endemic to the island. The Sarobetsu Plain is Japan's largest high-altitude wetland, and is dotted with large and small ponds and marshes. It is an important habitat for many species of birds including waterfowl.

Flora & Fauna



Rishiri Hinageshi

This endemic species only grows in the rocky areas near the summit of Mount Rishiri, and sprouts yellow blossoms in early summer. It is the only species of poppy that grows wild in Japan.



Rebun Lady's Slipper Orchid

This perennial in the orchid family only grows on Rebun Island. Every year from May to June, the Rebun Lady's Slipper Preserve is open to the public when the flowers are in bloom.



Yellow-breasted Bunting

This bird measures nearly 15 cm long and is a relative of the meadow bunting. A summer visitor, it flies to Hokkaido's grasslands and is known for the bright yellow summer plumage of the males.



Viviparous Lizard

This odd lizard gives birth to live young rather than laying eggs. In Japan, it can only be found in Hokkaido.

Activity



Mountain Climbing

Mount Rishiri, which boasts a height of 1,721 m and is counted among Japan's 100 most famous mountains, is a favorite of many climbers. The 360° panoramic views are a special treat for all who make it to the summit.



Flower Trekking

The trekking course on Rebun Island offers hikers the chance to see rare alpine plants that can only be seen at altitudes of 2,000 m or higher outside of Hokkaido. An expert guide will provide commentary as you enjoy a stroll around the island.



Cycling

With a circumference of about 60 km, Rishiri Island is one of Japan's leading cycling spots. Equipped with a cycling course, riders on a road bike can tour the island in about five to six hours.



Birdwatching

This is the perfect place for birdwatching, offering plenty of opportunities to see rare species such as the white-tailed eagle, black woodpecker, western yellow wagtail, and red-crowned crane. It is also a stopover point for migrating birds like the bean goose and greater white-fronted goose.

©Polaris Nature Guides & Consultants

Life & Culture



Island Sea Urchin Fishing & Kelp Harvesting

The ocean around Rishiri and Rebun islands is known for its high-end Rishiri Kelp. The area also has a prospering sea urchin fishing trade, which is the island's main marine resource.



Peat Digging

Until 2002, peat was dug in the Sarobetsu Wetlands for use as fuel and in improving soil quality. Efforts to restore nature around the peat digging sites and surround area are now under way.



Sarobetsu Plain Dairy Farms

The Sarobetsu Plain is one of the leading dairy farm areas in Hokkaido, and the milk and butter produced here is shipped all across Hokkaido and Japan.



I look forward to sharing the unique charms of these two islands, each with their own personality.

Rishiri Shima Guide Center

Toru Nishijima



Rishiri Island is known as the "Green Island," while Rebun Island is called the "Flower Island." These two locales boast beautiful and abundant nature, but their attractions go beyond that. Explore the islands more deeply from various perspectives, such as the lifestyle, history, and industrial culture of the locals.

Kushiro Shitsugen National Park



This national park includes the Kushiro River, which runs through eastern Hokkaido, and the Kushiro Wetlands, Japan's largest wetlands. It is home to many rare plants and animals including the red-crowned crane, which is designated as a special natural monument of Japan. Called the "barren lands" because of the difficulty of developing them, the Kushiro Wetlands are renowned internationally thanks to the efforts of local researchers and environmental preservation groups. This is also the first wetland in Japan to be registered in the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands in 1980, finally being designated as a national park seven years later. The birth of the first wetland-oriented national park is an important landmark in recognizing the value of marshlands' natural environment.

DATA

Date of Designation July 31, 1987

Area 28,788 ha



Nature

The Kushiro Wetlands, which run about 40 km inland at the deepest point from the coast, were an ocean in ancient times. The process of the ocean retreating and turning the area into wetlands created numerous ponds and marshes. The surrounding hills and highlands were likely once coastal cliffs when the area was an ocean, resulting in the unique geography of the Kushiro Wetlands as we know them today. Nearly 80% of the area is a low moor with vegetation mainly represented by the Japanese alder. The vast horizontal scenery where the primitive environment of the plains remains is the most appealing aspect of Kushiro Shitsugen National Park.

Flora & Fauna



Red-crowned Crane

This special natural monument of Japan was known as the sarurun kamuy by the Ainu, meaning "god of the wetlands." It can be found around the Kushiro Wetlands year-round.



Siberian Salamander

This creature made its way to Hokkaido during the ice age when the land masses were connected, and is known as a survivor of the ice age. In Japan, it can be seen in the Kushiro Wetlands.



Japanese Jacob's Ladder

In Hokkaido, this relict of the ice age is only found in Kushiro and Nemuro. It is a perennial that grows as tall as 30 to 60 centimeters in height, and has purple petals.



Yachibozu

These lumps of grass known as yachibozu, or "wetland monks" in Japanese, can be found in the Kushiro Wetlands. The sedges grow on top of the old stumps.

Activity



Canoe Tour

There is no dam on the Kushiro River, making it a dream course for canoeists. The mellow current from Lake Toro to Hosooka is a popular section for guided canoe tours.



Horse Trekking

Join a horse trekking tour and ride a dosanko, a Hokkaido horse breed. The dosanko is short and has a mild temper, making them perfect for beginners.



Snowshoe Tour

Strap on a pair of snowshoes and take a walk across the snow-covered Kushiro Wetlands on a guided tour. Encountering animals and searching for their tracks is part of the fun.



SL Fuyu-no-Shitsugen Train

In winter, the Steam Locomotive Fuyu-no-Shitsugen Train runs on the JR Semmo Main Line tracks which travels along the Kushiro River in the wetlands. A trip on this locomotive is a great way to enjoy the wetlands scenery up close.

Life & Culture



The Kushiro Coalfield

Mining here began in 1856, making this the oldest coal field in Hokkaido. Kushiro Coal Mine is the only coal mine in Japan currently in operation, and produces about one million tons annually.

Owned by Kushiro City Board of Education



Red-crowned Crane Conservation

Ever since the red-crowned crane, which was thought to have been extinct in Japan, was rediscovered in the Kushiro Wetlands in 1924, it has been fed and protected by locals.



Hokuto Archaeological Site Reconstructions of Pit Dwellings

This ancient cultural site is unique to Hokkaido, and can't be found anywhere in Honshu. Remnants of the ancient dwelling remain and the pit dwelling at the bottom of the hole has been reconstructed to showcase this semi-underground living space.



Commune with untouched nature while paddling a canoe.

« Kushiro Marsh & River

Matsuo Saito



Kushiro Wetland canoe tours offer the chance to slide across the surface of the water where the only sounds you can hear are of the river and birds. This unique tour lets you become one with nature. Experience an even more fantastical dreamlike world in winter when the area is covered in snow.

A Comprehensive Tour of Tokachi - Experiencing the Contrasts of the Hidaka Mountains, Rivers, and Plains

The Hidaka Mountains, stretching from north to south, are characterized by their long, continuous ridges. To the east lies the Tokachi region, where rivers flow from the mountains into the sea, and the boundless Tokachi Plains extend from the foothills. Known as the "Farm Kingdom", this region is home to countless fields and farms. Nutrient-rich plants and crops thrive, shaping the lives of the local people.

In this tour, you will learn about the rivers flowing from the Hidaka Mountains into Tokachi, uncovering the history and plants that originated there. Then, as you watch the transition from the extensive Tokachi Plains to the mighty mountain scenery, you will explore the unique culture that defines Tokachi.

Highlights of route	
1	Mountain views from the vast plains of Tokachi
2	Local experiences in the rivers and seas fed by sources in the Hidaka Mountains
3	Culinary experiences centered around local produce
4	Horse culture of Tokachi
Set season / month	Summer (May - October)
Number of participants	2 - 8 people
Tour Level	3: Dynamic Activities
*ATTA setting standards	*For intermediate-level travelers
Access	Private car

Start DAY 1

- 14:20 **Gathering and Departure** Obihiro Airport / Obihiro City
- 15:00 **Facility tour (guided tour)** Hidakasanmyakusangaku Center / Nakasatsunai Village
- 17:00 **Check-in** Hotel(Hotel Taiki) / Taiki Town
- 18:00 **Dinner** Local Izakaya / Taiki Town

A briefing on the characteristics and overview of the Hidaka Mountains.



Join a female hunter from Hiroo town for a guided forest trek. Learn traditional hunting techniques, craft accessories from deer antlers, and take part in a venison butchering experience. End the adventure with a BBQ featuring freshly prepared venison and local seafood.

DAY 2

- 9:30 **Breakfast and Check-out** Hotel(Hotel Taiki) / Taiki Town
- 15:00 **Wild Venison Experience - Nature Walks, Handmade Accessories, BBQ, and More! -** Seaside House / Hiroo Town
- 16:00 **Todomatsu (Abies Sachalinensis) distillation experience** MOVING INN / Taiki Town
- Hotel Check-in and Dinner** Hotel(MOVING INN) / Taiki Town



DAY 3

- 9:15 **Breakfast and Check-out** Hotel(MOVING INN) / Taiki Town
- 10:00 **Museum tour** Rokkatei Art Village Nakasatsunai Art Village / Nakasatsunai Village
- 12:00 **Lunch** Matsuhisaen / Memuro Town
- 13:00 **Electric bike cycling experience** Within the town / Memuro Town
- 16:30 **Check-in** Hotel(HOTEL NUPKA) / Obihiro City
- 17:00 **Carriage Bar and Dinner** Hotel/Local Izakaya / Obihiro City

Enjoy a horse-drawn carriage ride, savor local drinks, and experience the unique horse culture of Obihiro. Round off your day with a hearty dinner at a local izakaya.



DAY 4

- 9:45 **Breakfast and Check-out** Hotel(HOTEL NUPKA) / Obihiro City
- 12:30 **Guided segway experience** Tokachi Millennium Forest / Shimizu Town
- 14:00 **Lunch and Photoshoot** Biman Tei/Biman Panorama Park / Shimizu Town
- 14:45 **Break time (Ice cream)** Tokachi Alps Ranch / Shimizu Town
- 17:00 **Horse riding experience** Ranch Sun West / Shimizu Town
- 19:30 **Check-in and Dinner** Hotel(Forest Spa Resort Hokkaido Hotel) / Obihiro City
- Ainu traditional dance experience** Hotel / Obihiro City

Taste ice cream made from the milk of precious Brown Swiss cattle raised in open pastures.

A unique opportunity to witness and experience Ainu traditional dance, a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage.



DAY 5

- 10:15 **Breakfast and Check-out** Hotel(Forest Spa Resort Hokkaido Hotel) / Obihiro City
- 12:00 **Banei horse racing experience** Obihiro Racecourse / Obihiro City
- Arrival and Dismissal** Obihiro Airport / Obihiro City

Experience Ban'ei horse racing, the epitome of Tokachi's horse culture.



Hidaka Region - A Tour to Explore the Scenic Hidaka Mountains and the Past & Present of the Local Community

The Hidaka Mountains, stretching from north to south, are characterized by their long, continuous ridges. To the west, the Hidaka region boasts a landscape of towering mountains, rich horse culture, and a thriving fishing industry centered around kelp, all set against the expansive backdrop of the Pacific Ocean.

Steeped in history, Hidaka preserves the legacy of Ainu culture, such as horses and kelp. Visitors can explore the folklore passed down through generations from the large Ainu community there. The region is also known for its horse breeding, offering a rare glimpse into the training of future racehorses at its many ranches. You can also witness traditional kelp fishing and drying methods, providing a deeper connection to the local way of life. In this tour, you will delve into the natural beauty of the Hidaka Mountains and gain a deeper understanding of the local industries.

Highlights of route	
1	Explore the rich heritage of Nibutani Ainu Culture.
2	A harmonious blend of art and nature
3	Scenic cycling tours
4	Mount Apoi hiking
5	Experience local Hidaka kelp
Set season / month	Summer (May - October)
Number of participants	2 - 8 people
Tour Level	4: Dynamic Activities
*ATTA setting standards	*For advanced-level travelers
Access	Private car

Start DAY 1

- 12:00 **Gathering and Departure** New Chitose Airport / Chitose City
- 13:30 **Lunch** Fujikami or Nihonbashi / Road Station "Jukai Road Hidaka" / Hidaka Town
- 15:50 **Museum tour (guided tour)** Nibutani Ainu Culture Museum / Biratori Town
- 16:45 **Production experience** Urespa / Biratori Town
- Check-in and Dinner** Hotel(Biratori Onsen Yukara) / Biratori Town

Savor a delicious lunch featuring Yamame (Japanese salmon), a local



DAY 2

- 10:00 **Breakfast and Check-out** Hotel(Biratori Onsen Yukara) / Biratori Town
- 11:50 **Museum visit (guided tour)** Di-Maccio Art Museum / Niikappu Town
- 13:40 **Lunch** Niikappu Onsen Re-cord no Yu Hotel Hills / Niikappu Town
- 15:00 **Panoramic view of the Hidaka Mountains and Break** Michi-no-Eki (Roadside Station) Mitsuishi / Shinhidaka Town
- Check-in and Dinner** Hotel(Urakawa Yushun Village AERU) / Urakawa Town

Enjoy the unique menu of Niikappu, located along the coast.



DAY 3

- 9:30 **Breakfast and Check-out** Hotel(Urakawa Yushun Village AERU) / Urakawa Town
- 12:15 **Electric bike cycling experience 1 - Deer herd watching and Fire-starting experience -** Urakawacho Oromappu Camping Ground / Urakawa Town
- 13:15 **Lunch** Golden Patrnia / Samani Town
- 15:30 **Electric bike cycling experience 2 - Geosite tour -** Kannonyama, OyakoIwa, Tojuin Temple / Samani Town
- 16:45 **Facility tour (guided tour)** Geopark Visitor Center / Samani Town
- Check-in and Dinner** Hotel(Apoi Sanso) / Samani Town

Ride an electric bike through the pristine national park and take in its untouched beauty. Along the way, enjoy the near-certain sight of majestic wild deer roaming in large herds. Try your hand at traditional fire-starting techniques, then unwind by a crackling campfire, embracing its warmth and timeless charm.



DAY 4

- 8:00 **Breakfast and Check-out** Hotel(Apoi Sanso) / Samani Town
- 11:45 **Mount Apoi hiking - The 5th Station Cafe -** Mount Apoi / Samani Town
- 13:00 **Lunch** Guardian of the Shorthorn Kingdom / Erimo Town
- 16:30 **Facility tour (guided tour) and Kelp boat cruise** Cape Erimo Wind Museum / Erimo Town
- Check-in and Dinner** Hotel(Mitsuishikonbuonsen Kurazo) / Shinhidaka Town

Join us for a guided climb of Mount Apoi, an 810-meter peak nestled within a national park. Hike up to the 5th station, where breathtaking panoramic views unfold before you.



DAY 5

- 10:00 **Breakfast and Check-out** Hotel(Mitsuishikonbuonsen Kurazo) / Shinhidaka Town
- 12:30 **Museum tour (guided tour)** Shinhidaka Town Museum / Shinhidaka Town
- Arrival and Dismissal** New Chitose Airport / Chitose City

A museum dedicated to the famous kelp products of Hidaka.